

# JOURNAL

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE BONNEVILLE POWER ADMINISTRATION

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Web site: [www.bpa.gov/corporate/pubs/Journal](http://www.bpa.gov/corporate/pubs/Journal)

## BPA, utilities call for conservation

BPA, other utilities and public interest groups are urging Northwest residents to save electricity this spring and summer to reduce the likelihood — or severity — of rate increases this fall due to another below-average water year. In a joint press conference March 24 at BPA headquarters in Portland, Administrator Steve Wright and representatives of utilities and energy efficiency groups gave a united appeal to citizens of the region to help combat the effects of reduced hydropower due to the dry year.

Barring unscheduled plant outages, the region should not have a shortage of power, the speakers said. But, the question is, "At what price?" The issue this year is dollars, not power reliability. Wright said, "We can't do anything about the weather, but we can do something about our electricity use. Take actions now to protect your wallet." (For a list of energy efficiency steps, see BPA's Web site at [www.bpa.gov/Energy/N/Energy\\_Tips/save\\_energy/](http://www.bpa.gov/Energy/N/Energy_Tips/save_energy/)).

The Northwest gets 60 percent of its electricity from hydropower and depends on the weather for its power supply. The last six years in a row have seen below average water, and 2000 through 2005 will set a new record as the worst six consecutive years in the historical record. "That includes the Dust Bowl years of the 1930s," Wright said.

## Wind project connection work starts

BPA construction crews began work in early March on this year's first project to interconnect a new wind generation site. BPA's Tucannon River switching station

will integrate up to 150 megawatts of power into the Walla Walla-North Lewiston 115-kilovolt line from the Hopkins Ridge wind project, now being built in Columbia County, Wash. The site, a project of Blue Sky Wind, LLC, will generate up to 350 MW to the federal grid that BPA operates. The remainder will interconnect through utility transmission providers.

Blue Sky is funding the work and will be reimbursed with future BPA transmission services of equal value. The new switching station is on five acres of land near Dayton, Wash. Blue Sky will build the line from the wind facility to the station. The project should be operating by this December.

## Wind energy grid access is topic

BPA Administrator Steve Wright told more than 150 people attending a workshop at Portland in mid-March that wind energy must be recognized as an increasingly important component of the nation's energy portfolio. The workshop covered transmission access rules for wind energy. Wright said the challenge is to get the most the region can out of the existing grid, protect current users and encourage new investment in transmission and generation.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission sponsored the March 16-17 workshop as part of an ongoing exploration of obstacles to marketing wind power. FERC encouraged BPA to complete and submit its proposal for a "conditional firm" transmission product. Wright says BPA is committed to finding ways to make such a product work, while respecting the rights of existing users.

## New product is on fast track

The "conditional firm" transmission product BPA is now developing may become the national model for integrating wind and other intermittent renewable resources into constrained transmission systems. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission recognizes that BPA's product is the closest to completion.

Conditional firm would allow long-term firm transmission capacity to be sold with the proviso that service could be curtailed during some parts of a year. This could allow use of presently underused capacity on critical transmission pathways.



Work is under way on a switching station near Dayton, Wash., to connect up to 150 megawatts of wind power into the BPA grid.



Developers need to acquire long-term firm transmission rights to support financing of their generation projects. BPA's conditional firm product can help meet that need. BPA will refine its proposal with regional transmission users and generation developers before submitting it to FERC later this spring, with a goal of making conditional firm transmission ready for sale by October.

### **BPA, utilities unite to improve grid**

BPA has signed a Transmission Issues Group agreement to study ways to improve the planning, oversight and operation of the Northwest grid through existing institutions. By Aug. 1, TIG plans to outline steps the region can take in the next two-to-three years to improve access to, and the efficiency, of the region's grid system.

TIG is a voluntary association of Northwest utilities. Participants to date include BPA, the Washington Public Utilities Association, the Public Power Council, Avista Corp., Chelan County Public Utility District, Clark Public Utilities, Cowlitz County PUD, Grant County PUD, Portland General Electric, Puget Sound Energy and Tacoma Power. Others may join.

BPA is committed to considering a well-developed set of improvements based, to the largest extent possible, on existing institutions as part of its due diligence related to future decisions on Grid West. Grid West, a proposed regional transmission organization for the Northwest, is scheduled to reach its next developmental decision point in late September. To follow or join in TIG's efforts, see its new Web site at [www.tig-nw.org](http://www.tig-nw.org).

### **One-utility transmission for the NW**

The Northwest transmission grid has become increasingly stressed in recent years as growth of transmission use outpaces growth in the grid itself. This problem cannot be solved by BPA alone or by any single utility. The answer lies in cooperation among utilities and a new, one-utility approach to operating and planning the region's grid. BPA has just published a new "Keeping Current" that has more on the problems and potential solutions. To see "Wanted: One-utility transmission for the Pacific Northwest," online, go to <http://www.bpa.gov/corporate/pubs/Keeping/05kc/kc0305.pdf>.

### **Power line is ahead of schedule**

The Schultz-Wautoma 500-kilovolt transmission line construction project is now six weeks ahead of schedule

and well under budget. The original cost estimate was \$175 million.

The project is slated to be energized by the end of this year. The new line will add 600 megawatts of transfer capacity to the heart of BPA's grid in central Washington. It runs about 63 miles from north of Ellensburg, Wash., to the Hanford Reservation area where the new Wautoma Substation terminates the line.

### **BPA funds new fish tracking system**

BPA has awarded \$700,000 in contracts to Digital Angel Corp for a new tracking system for juvenile salmon. After design testing at company facilities, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will install the 16-foot square antenna in the flume at Bonneville Dam in time to count fish in April 2006.

By next spring the new system will be picking up signals from pit tags implanted in juvenile salmon as they speed past Bonneville Dam at 40 feet per second.

### **DC intertie upgrade is complete**

BPA officials joined Los Angeles city officials and those from the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power and Southern California Edison for the rededication of the 846-mile DC intertie March 24 in Los Angeles. The event recognized completion of the upgrade for the 3,100-megawatt, high-voltage direct current transmission line from The Dalles, Ore., to Sylmar, Calif. BPA had completed upgrade of the Celilo Converter Station at the north end of the intertie last year. LADWP's \$118-million project at the Sylmar station completed the upgrade at the south end of the intertie.

The upgrades increase the reliability and life span of the system, and reduce operation and maintenance costs. They increase energy efficiency, eliminate use of mercury and incorporate lessons learned from major earthquakes that damaged the Sylmar station.

### **BPA facts update is online**

The updated "BPA Facts" with data from fiscal 2004 is now online. You can find it at [http://www.bpa.gov/corporate/about\\_BPA/Facts/FactDocs/BPA\\_Facts\\_2004.pdf](http://www.bpa.gov/corporate/about_BPA/Facts/FactDocs/BPA_Facts_2004.pdf). Or, to get a printed copy, call the BPA Public Information Center at (503) 230-7334.

## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT** Updates and Notices

### **TRANSMISSION – NEW PROJECT**

**Big Horn Wind Project Interconnection – Klickitat County, Wash.**  
PPM Energy has requested to integrate up to 200 MW of power generated from the Big Horn Wind Project into the Federal Columbia River Transmission System. BPA would need to build a new switching

substation, which would be called Spring Creek Substation. Klickitat County held a public meeting Feb. 23 to determine whether to issue a conditional use permit for the wind project. A tiered ROD, under the Business Plan EIS, is expected soon after Klickitat County's decision in March 2005. See <http://www.transmission.bpa.gov/PlanProj/Wind/> for more information.

## AGENCY – ONGOING PROJECTS

### Supplement Analysis to the Business Plan EIS – Regionwide

BPA will prepare an SA to its Business Plan EIS. The 1995 EIS analyzed the environmental impacts of BPA's business practices, such as marketing and transmitting power, energy conservation, renewable energy development, and fish and wildlife mitigation activities. The impacts analyzed include effects on the natural, economic and social environments. Public letters announcing and outlining the SA to the Business Plan EIS went out in December 2004. The comment period on the SA closed on March 1, 2005. For additional information about the SA, and the comments that were received, see BPA's Web site at [http://www.bpa.gov/efw/Environmental\\_Planning\\_and\\_Analysis/Business\\_Plan\\_SA/](http://www.bpa.gov/efw/Environmental_Planning_and_Analysis/Business_Plan_SA/).

## CONSERVATION – ONGOING PROJECTS

### Post 2006 Conservation Workshop – Regionwide

A discussion on the Post 2006 Conservation Proposal will be held from 9 a.m. to noon in Portland on April 12. For meeting logistics and building security procedures call (503) 230-3158. Additional information is available at <http://www.bpa.gov/Energy/N/Post2006Conservation/> (See calendar of events.)

## FISH AND WILDLIFE – ONGOING PROJECTS

### Federal Caucus

A new e-mail list has been created to provide updates on Federal Caucus activities to protect and recover endangered fish in the Columbia River Basin. E-mail notices will be sent when updates are posted to the Federal Caucus Web site [www.salmonrecovery.gov](http://www.salmonrecovery.gov). If you would like to be added to the e-mail list, please send contact information to Katherine Cheney at [kacheney@bpa.gov](mailto:kacheney@bpa.gov).

### Grande Ronde and Imnaha Spring Chinook Project EIS – Wallowa and Union counties, Ore.

Fish trapping, incubation, rearing and release hatchery facilities are proposed to help boost spring chinook salmon populations in the Grande Ronde and Imnaha river basins of Northeast Oregon. Planned facilities would modify and augment existing Lower Snake River Compensation Plan facilities. The FEIS is available online at [http://www.efw.bpa.gov/environmental\\_services/Document\\_Library/Grand\\_Ronde/](http://www.efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/Document_Library/Grand_Ronde/). A ROD to proceed with land acquisition, final design and further evaluation studies was signed March 11, 2005.

### Kootenai River Ecosystem/Fisheries Improvement Study – Boundary and Bonners counties, Idaho, and Lincoln County, Mont.

The Kootenai Tribe of Idaho (in coordination with Idaho Fish and Game; Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks; and British Columbia Ministry of Environment, Land and Parks) plans to initiate a controlled nutrient restoration effort in the mainstem Kootenai River near the Montana-Idaho border. A public scoping open house was held Dec. 13, 2004, in Bonners Ferry, Idaho. Close of comment was Jan. 28, 2005. More information is available online at [http://www.efw.bpa.gov/environmental\\_services/Document\\_Library/Kootenai/](http://www.efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/Document_Library/Kootenai/).

### Salmon Creek EIS – Okanogan County, Wash.

BPA proposes to fund a project to enhance fish habitat, fish passage and instream flows in 4.3 miles of lower Salmon Creek, a tributary of the Okanogan River. The project would rehabilitate the stream channel, revegetate stream banks and increase streamflows. A DEIS was released in September 2004 and is available at [http://www.efw.bpa.gov/environmental\\_services/Document\\_Library/Salmon\\_Creek/](http://www.efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/Document_Library/Salmon_Creek/). A public meeting was held Sept. 28, 2004, and the comment period closed Nov. 9, 2004. Further environmental analysis and comment on this project is delayed until summer 2005 and will continue only if given approval for funding by the Northwest Power and Conservation Council.

### South Fork Flathead Watershed/Westslope Cutthroat Trout Conservation Program EIS – Flathead National Forest, Mont.

BPA proposes to fund a project to remove exotic trout species from selected lakes in the South Fork of the Flathead drainage. A DEIS was released and the comment period closed Aug. 20, 2004. A FEIS is being prepared. Additional information is available at [http://www.efw.bpa.gov/environmental\\_services/Document\\_Library/South\\_Fork\\_Flathead/](http://www.efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/Document_Library/South_Fork_Flathead/).

## POWER – ONGOING PROJECTS

### Power Function Review – Regionwide

BPA's Power Business Line's Power Function Review began in January 2005. This process is designed to provide interested parties opportunities to examine, understand and provide input on the cost projections, including fish and wildlife costs, that will form the basis for the FY 2007 wholesale power rate case. Input received will be considered in establishing program costs for the FY 2007 rate case initial proposal, which is expected in the fall of 2005. A number of technical workshops, management discussions and regional public meetings have been held and more are scheduled. The public comment period has been extended to May 20, 2005, to allow participants an opportunity to provide comment on a draft of the Power Function Review closeout letter. Additional information along with an updated schedule of meetings is posted on BPA's Web site at [www.bpa.gov/power/review](http://www.bpa.gov/power/review). (See calendar of events and close of comment.)

### BPA Service to DSI Customers – "Straw Proposal" – Regionwide

On Feb. 4, 2005, BPA sent a letter to customers, constituents, tribes and other regional stakeholders announcing additional opportunities for public input on BPA service to DSI customers during the FY 2007-2011 period. The public process was to seek comments on the BPA "straw proposal" described in the letter and on other alternatives that may be proposed. BPA held a public meeting on March 1 to hear comments from the public. The comment period closed March 11, 2005. For a complete list of comments received or to find more information, check out BPA's Web site at <http://www.bpa.gov/power/pl/regionaldialogue/announcements.shtml>.

## TRANSMISSION – ONGOING PROJECTS

### Arlington CEP Wind Project Interconnection – Gilliam County, Ore.

Columbia Energy Partners (CEP) has requested to integrate up to 200 MW of power generated from the Arlington CEP Wind Project into the Federal Columbia River Transmission System. CEP would interconnect to the proposed Jones Canyon BPA substation adjacent to the 230-kV McNary-Santiam line. BPA's proposed project would involve building Jones Canyon Substation adjacent to the CEP collector substation and an access road from the county road to the BPA substation. Construction of the substation would involve clearing approximately six acres of grassland to build a short access road and a substation. A tiered ROD to the Business Plan EIS was issued in January 2005. See [http://www.efw.bpa.gov/environmental\\_services/Document\\_Library/Arlington/](http://www.efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/Document_Library/Arlington/) for more information.

### Combine Hills Wind Project Interconnection – Umatilla County, Ore.

Eurus Energy America Corporation has requested to integrate up to 63 MW of power generated from the Combine Hills Wind Project into the Federal Columbia River Transmission System. BPA would need to upgrade 5.8 miles of the Walla Walla-Pendleton transmission line. The upgrade of the transmission line would involve replacing the wood poles within the same right-of-way and stringing new conductor. This request is an expansion of an existing 41-MW interconnection to PP&L's transmission system. A public letter describing the proposal was sent out in December 2004. See <http://www.transmission.bpa.gov/PlanProj/Wind/> for more information.

### Hanford Reach National Monument CCP/EIS – Benton, Franklin and Grant counties, Wash.

BPA is participating as a cooperating agency in a land management planning process led by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The USFWS seeks to develop a comprehensive conservation plan as required by the Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997. BPA is providing information and writing sections of the plan that pertain to transmission facilities, roads, energy facilities and river flow management within the monument. A DEIS is scheduled for release in 2005.

### Hopkins Ridge Wind Project Interconnection – Columbia County, Wash.

BPA was asked by RES America Developments to interconnect 150 MW of the output of the proposed Hopkins Ridge Wind Project, which will require constructing a BPA switching substation adjacent to an existing BPA transmission line. BPA decided to offer contract terms for interconnection in a ROD tiered to BPA's Business Plan EIS

and the Business Plan ROD. The tiered ROD was finalized on Dec. 20, 2004. See <http://www.transmission.bpa.gov/PlanProj/Wind/> for more information, including the ROD.

**Klondike III Wind Project Interconnection – Sherman County, Ore.**  
BPA has been asked by PPM Energy Inc. to interconnect 300 MW of the output of the proposed Klondike III Wind Project. Interconnection would require BPA to build and operate a new 230-kV transmission line and two substations. The new facilities would be built near the towns of Wasco and Rufus, Ore. BPA plans to analyze the effects of the BPA action and the PPM Wind Project in an EIS. BPA expects to issue a Draft EIS in summer 2005. On March 1, 2005, a scoping meeting was held in St. Mary's Parish Hall, 807 Bennett Street, Wasco, Ore. The comment period closed March 17. See <http://www.transmission.bpa.gov/PlanProj/Wind/> for more information.

**Leaning Juniper Wind Project Interconnection (Formerly Arlington PPM Wind Project Interconnection) – Gilliam County, Ore.**

Pacific Power Marketing has requested to integrate up to 200 MW of power generated from the Leaning Juniper Wind Project into the Federal Columbia River Transmission System. PPM would interconnect at the same substation as proposed for the Arlington CEP Wind Project described above (Jones Canyon). A tiered ROD, under the Business Plan EIS, was signed March 11, 2005. See <http://www.transmission.bpa.gov/PlanProj/Wind/> for more information.

**Nisqually Transmission Line Relocation Project EA – Thurston County, Wash.**

BPA will relocate two miles of transmission line corridor off the Nisqually Indian Reservation in Thurston County, Wash. Construction of the lines on Fort Lewis is scheduled to begin in May 2005 with removal of the existing lines, and completion of the project is expected by winter 2005. A preliminary EA was released for public comment in October 2004. There were few public comments. A revision sheet for the EA, a FONSI and a mitigation action plan were released Feb. 7, 2005. See [http://www.transmission.bpa.gov/PlanProj/Transmission\\_Projects/](http://www.transmission.bpa.gov/PlanProj/Transmission_Projects/) for more information.

**Schultz-Wautoma Area 500-kV Line Project – near Ellensburg to near the Hanford Reservation, Wash.**

BPA is building a new 500-kV line from Schultz Substation to the new Wautoma Substation southwest of the Hanford Monument. Construction of the Sickler-Schultz portion of the line began in February 2004. A construction update letter was sent in December 2004. Fiber construction began in late January 2004. Seventy-three transmission towers were flown into place the week of Jan. 24 and stringing is underway. The project is scheduled to be completed by December 2005. An FEIS was released in February 2003. The ROD was released in March 2003. Construction on the new Wautoma Substation began May 5, 2003, and is halfway complete. See [http://www.transmission.bpa.gov/PlanProj/Transmission\\_Projects/](http://www.transmission.bpa.gov/PlanProj/Transmission_Projects/) for more information and construction photos.

**White Bluffs-Richland Relocation – Benton, Wash.**

BPA is proposing to relocate a portion of its White Bluffs-Richland 115-kilovolt transmission line that is currently located in private homeowner backyards of the 1800 block of Stevens and Mahan drives in Richland, Wash. BPA plans to relocate its transmission line to the city of Richland's power line located on the east side of Stevens Drive so that both lines would be located within the city's right-of-way. Construction began in fall 2004 and two concrete pier foundations were installed. A construction update letter was sent to the landowners announcing construction to resume in March 2005. Construction will be completed during the spring of 2005. See [http://www.transmission.bpa.gov/PlanProj/Transmission\\_Projects/](http://www.transmission.bpa.gov/PlanProj/Transmission_Projects/) for more information.

## SUPPLEMENT ANALYSES

### Yakima Fisheries Project EIS:

- SA-10 Fall Chinook Research Program at Stiles and Edler ponds – Kittitas County, Wash.
- SA-11 Lake Cle Elum Coho Acclimation Site – Kittitas County, Wash.
- SA-12 Vegetation Management – herbicide spraying for weed control – Kittitas County, Wash.

### Watershed Management Program EIS:

- SA-204 Kalispell Resident Fish Project – Pend Oreille County, Wash.
- SA-205 Restore McComas Meadows/ Meadows Creek Watershed – Idaho County, Idaho

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### Power Function Review – Technical Workshops

All technical workshops will be held in the Rates Hearing Room located at 911 N.E. 11th Ave. in Portland.

- **April 5** – 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Topic: Fish & wildlife program costs, both expense and capital
- **April 6** – 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Topic: Risk mitigation packages and tools
- **May 9** – 1 to 4 p.m. Topic: Summary of what we've heard and discussion of outstanding issues and draft closeout letter

### Power Function Review – Management-Level Discussions

- **April 18** – 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., BPA Rates Hearing Room, 911 N.E. 11th Ave. Topic: Risk mitigation packages and tools and fish & wildlife program costs, both expense and capital
- **May 16** – 9 to 11:30 a.m., BPA Rates Hearing Room, 911 N.E. 11th Ave. Topic: Summary of what we've heard, outstanding issues and discussion with the administrator

### Power Function Review – Regional Meetings

- **April 13** – Registration: 4:30 p.m., Meeting: 5 to 9 p.m., BPA Rates Hearing Room, 911 N.E. 11th Ave., Portland, Ore.
- **April 14** – Registration: 4:30 p.m., Meeting: 5 to 9 p.m., Mountaineers Headquarters, 300 Third Ave. W., Seattle, Wash.
- **April 19** – Registration: 4:30 p.m., Meeting: 5 to 9 p.m., Red Lion, 475 River Parkway, Idaho Falls, Idaho
- **April 21** – Registration: 4:30 p.m., Meeting: 5 to 9 p.m., WinGate Inn, 5252 Airway Blvd., Missoula, Mont.
- **April 26** – Registration: 4:30 p.m., Meeting: 5 to 9 p.m., Airport Ramada Inn, 8909 Airport Rd., Spokane, Wash.

### Post 2006 Conservation Workshop – Regionwide

- **April 12** – 9 a.m. to noon. The meeting will be in Portland. For meeting logistics and building security procedures call (503) 230-3158

## RECORD OF DECISION SIGNED BY ADMINISTRATOR

- **March 11, 2005** – Grande Ronde and Imnaha Spring Chinook Project
- **March 11, 2005** – Leaning Juniper Wind Project

## CLOSE OF COMMENT

- **May 20** – Power Function Review (*Note new date.*)

**If you have questions or comments, or you want to be added to the mailing list for any project, call (503) 230-3478 (Portland) or 1-800-622-4519.**

To order copies of documents, call: 1-800-622-4520 or (503) 230-7334. Written comments may be sent to: BPA, P.O. Box 14428, Portland, OR 97293-4428. E-mail address: [comment@BPA.gov](mailto:comment@BPA.gov). BPA home page: <http://www.bpa.gov>. For details on BPA environmental reviews listed above, including site maps and documents issued to date, see <http://www.efw.bpa.gov/cgi-bin/PSA/NEPA/Projects>. **Process Abbreviations:** EA-Environmental Assessment, EFSEC-Washington Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council, EFSC-Oregon Energy Facility Siting Council, EIS-Environmental Impact Statement, DEIS-Draft Environmental Impact Statement, FEIS-Final Environmental Impact Statement, FONSI-Finding of No Significant Impact, NOI-Notice of Intent, ROD-Record of Decision, SA-Supplement Analysis.

